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BY

MARTHA L. EDWARDS

Lake Erie College

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*Reprinted from Ohio Archaeological and  
Historical Quarterly  
Volume XXVIII, April, 1919*







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COLUMBUS, OHIO:  
THE F. J. HEER PRINTING CO.  
1919

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## OHIO'S RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND THE WAR.\*

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What have the churches of Ohio had to do with the war? The answer to this question must of necessity await investigation since the source material upon which final judgments are to be based cannot now be assembled. There is, however, evidence already at hand in the collections of the Historical Commission of Ohio which permits a tentative sketch of what the churches of the state have accomplished during the first year of the war, and it is from this incomplete record that the present study has been drawn. The sources which have proved most useful are the official reports, bulletins, pamphlets, and periodicals published by the various religious organizations. Information has also been gleaned from sermons and addresses, printed announcements, and programs of church services, while at certain doubtful points this information has been corroborated by verbal or written assurances from representative spokesmen of the several faiths.

As a preliminary step it may be well to determine at the outset what is meant by "the churches," and how many of these churches there are in Ohio. The term "church organization" as used by the Census Bureau of the United States applies to "any organization for religious worship which has a separate membership, whether called a church proper, congregation, meeting, society," or by any other designation. According to the preliminary census report for 1916, there were in that year over 200,000 such organizations in the United States with a total membership of more than 42,000,000, approximately two-fifths of the entire population of the United States. These numerous church organizations were grouped in 201 religious denominations varying in size from a single congregation to a church whose membership amounted to more than 15,000,000. About thirty-seven per cent of the total church membership in the

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\* This article was read before the Ohio Teachers' Association, November 15, 1918.

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United States was reported by the Catholic church, about one-half of one per cent by Eastern Orthodox churches, less than one per cent by Jewish congregations, and the remaining sixty-one per cent by Protestant and other churches. The census statement, however, calls attention to the fact that these percentages overstate the relative strength of Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches which count baptized children as members and underestimate that of the Jews who in orthodox congregations count only male incorporators and heads of families who have contributed financially to their support.

The numerical strength of religious denominations in the state of Ohio at the present time can not be accurately stated until the tabulation of the religious census of 1916 shall have been completed. The most recent statistics now available for individual states, therefore, are those of the religious census of 1906. In that year there were in Ohio nearly 10,000 church organizations whose combined membership included about two-fifths of the population of the state. The membership of the Catholic Church amounted to thirteen per cent of the total population, that of all Protestant churches was twenty-six per cent, while the membership of other denominations embraced about one per cent. The remaining sixty-one per cent of the population was not reported by any religious denomination. In actual numbers the largest membership was in the Catholic Church. The largest number of church organizations was reported by Methodist sects of which no less than eight were represented within the state. Next in regard to number of congregations came the United Brethren, Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, Disciples, and Catholics. Each of the Protestant denominations above-mentioned included several distinct religious groups. There were, for example, seven different kinds of Presbyterians, as many varieties of Baptists, twelve sects of Lutherans and nine branches of the Mennonite faith. In all, there were nearly one hundred religious denominations actively organized within the state.

The great diversity of religious elements in this country has been due in part to differences of creed and discipline, in part to racial grouping within the sect, the latter distinction



being indicated by the languages in which church services are conducted. In this respect the churches of Ohio are typical of the nation for in 1906 there were twenty-four different languages thus in use. Among the vernacular languages used in congregations and parochial schools in this state German was far in the lead. Accurate statistics for Ohio are not at present accessible but in the United States as a whole the religious census for 1906 reports seventy-seven denominations using the German language in congregations aggregating more than three and a half million members. While it is not likely that there had been any noticeable decline in the numbers of German congregations during the intervening decade, the census report of 1916 will undoubtedly record a considerable increase in the number employing one or another of the Slavic languages which may in some degree have acted as a counterpoise to the weight of German influence in religious organizations.

For a century and more it has been obvious that minute differentiation of creed or of race was a hindrance to the efficiency of religious activities in the United States. From time to time therefore, attempts have been made to consolidate sects which were not fundamentally antagonistic in creed. This process, however, has not yet been completed by any Protestant denomination. Presbyterian assemblies are still endeavoring to harmonize minor differences among ten Presbyterian organizations; Baptist sects are still distinct; nor can Methodist churches all agree. The most recent effort of Lutheran churches in this direction was brought to public attention through the presentation of an application to Congress by a Senator from Ohio for a charter of incorporation intended to amalgamate three of the twenty-one Lutheran sects in the United States. More significant than these sectarian movements was the organization of the Federal Council of Churches in 1908 by representative leaders of thirty Protestant denominations. This Federal Council differs from earlier experiments in church union in more than one respect. The most striking feature of the plan is its distinctively federal character. Abandoning at the outset the futile attempt to harmonize conflicting creeds, the Federal Council limited its province to the recommendation of a course



of action. It has no authority to enforce decisions, and the autonomy of its constituent bodies in regard to creed, form of worship, or of church government is expressly guaranteed, the aim and purpose of the organization as stated in its constitution being "to promote a spirit of fellowship, service, and co-operation" among denominations which still remain distinct. Similar to the Federal Council in purpose and in plan are the local church federations of which there are at present seven in Ohio. In the course of time no doubt this number will be increased and local federations will be brought into closer co-operation through a State Federation of Churches upon the model of that already effected in the neighboring state of Indiana.

Such, in brief, was the religious situation in Ohio at the outbreak of the war: ten thousand separate congregations of one hundred or more religious faiths, differing in race, in language, in discipline, and in creed; some persistently clinging to the ideals of an earlier age and striving to perpetuate in the twentieth century the isolation which had once been needful for the preservation of their faith, while others had been unified through ecclesiastical organizations which greatly enhanced their corporate strength. Viewing the situation from the one aspect it would seem rash to infer the existence of a common religious spirit among such heterogeneous elements. Penetrating vision, however, reveals the fact that out of the mutual conflict of diverse creeds in the United States there has gradually emerged a common religious ideal which all denominations have tended to approximate, which has made co-operation possible and has given a distinctive character to the work of American churches during the war.

Religious emotion, already deeply stirred by the solemn appeal of the President's message, responded at once to the declaration of war. On the following Easter Sunday the flag took its place beside the cross in some of the most conservative churches of Ohio, there to remain until Easter peace should again prevail, and on Wednesday evening of Easter week at an hour set apart by the Governor of the State, congregations assembled for special services of prayer and supplication. Mean-



while expressions of loyal support were being conveyed to the President by ministers, bishops and rabbis from every section of the country on behalf of the religious organizations which they represented and in the course of time these assurances were duly confirmed by official utterances and by constructive plans for supporting the government during the continuance of war.

One form of war service which might naturally be expected of voluntary organizations in the United States the churches were peculiarly well fitted to perform. Religious thought in this country having ever been deeply impregnated with moral ideas, the moral issues involved in the European conflict had furnished a leading theme for sermons, addresses and religious discussions since 1914 and after the nation was irrevocably committed to the cause of civilization and humanity by the declaration of war, the churches became fully conscious of their high obligation. Religion and patriotism were still recognized as quite distinct, yet owing to the nature of the struggle, it was inevitable that they should be allied in a common cause. From the first moment, therefore, the churches directed their efforts to enlisting public opinion in whole-hearted support of the moral issues involved in the war. Within the churches the appeal to patriotism was made through prayers and sermons, through hymns and music, through insistent demands for personal service of every kind. Enthusiasm for the cause to which the flag within the church had been dedicated stimulated thus by religious devotion was raised to a higher pitch. Here and there it is true these innovations were viewed with deep misgiving as indicating too close an alliance between church and state. Others there were who openly protested that flags and patriotic addresses were manifestly out of place in the buildings set apart for religious worship. In many instances it is evident that these objections were thoroughly sincere, being in fact survivals of a point of view commonly held by churches in the United States and still adhered to by certain denominations. In other instances on the contrary, there seems little room to doubt that protest against the introduction of patriotic features into church services was used as camouflage to screen pro-German sentiments within the congregation.



As the war went on protests of this kind were less frequently urged and even in congregations where enthusiasm for the cause of the allies remained luke warm it was usually deemed expedient to adopt the customs of neighboring churches in order that the imputation of being un-American might thereby be avoided. In addition to the changes in church services, various other methods of stimulating war enthusiasm have been effectively used by the churches. Resolutions of congregations, associations, synods, and assemblies, pastoral letters read in the churches, and authoritative utterances in the religious periodical press have exerted an incalculable influence in turning the balance of wavering opinion.

A far more difficult aspect of this same task called forth equally prompt and persistent effort on the part of the churches. At the outbreak of the war all voluntary organizations were confronted with the problem of maintaining loyalty within their own ranks, and churches as well as clubs and associations were frequently in danger of being misrepresented by individual expressions which in no wise reflected corporate opinion. In many Protestant churches both liberal and evangelical the pacifist idea long persisted and if too greatly stressed after this country entered the war might easily assume a negative aspect of disloyalty. Ministers who adhered to pacifist theories and who cherished the hope of peaceful settlement after the declaration of war were apt therefore to give an impression which a majority of the congregation might actively resent. An incident which occurred in Cincinnati may serve as an illustration of the tendency for pacifist preaching to disappear whenever the incompatibility between pacifism and patriotism became sufficiently clear. Becoming impatient with the pacifist sermons of their pastor the congregation of the Unitarian church in that city formally demanded his resignation. In order to establish beyond all question the patriotic attitude of the congregation, the resolutions adopted at the congregational meeting were given the fullest publicity and the participation of its members in war activities was urgently recommended. In congregations where sentiment had not been unequivocally defined and especially in German churches, the removal of pastors was sometimes



hastened by the action of the community. Summary procedure was the usual resort. In Coshocton, in Henry County, and in other parts of the state, German pastors who had been tarred and feathered by their neighbors were afterwards formally dismissed by the vote of the congregations. Not infrequently, however, these mob attacks were misdirected. In Huron, Ohio, for example, the resignation offered by the pastor was not accepted, because after full investigation the congregation became convinced that the charges made against him could not be sustained.

Similar complications arose in educational institutions under sectarian control. Perhaps the most conspicuous incident of the kind occurring in Ohio, certainly the one which was given the widest publicity, was the removal of the president of Baldwin-Wallace College after a thorough investigation conducted by a special committee of Methodist bishops. The decisive action of this committee was intended to serve a two-fold purpose; on the one hand, it was a warning to those in charge of similar institutions, while on the other, it might be construed as a guarantee of patriotism on the part of the Methodist Church. In general, religious organizations have been held responsible by public opinion for the suppression of enemy propaganda in educational institutions under their control and only in cases where ecclesiastical authorities have been slow to act has it been imperative for the federal government to intervene. As might naturally be expected evidences of disaffection were most frequently found in parochial schools giving instruction in the German language. Teachers in some of these institutions therefore have remained under the close surveillance of the federal authorities throughout the war while others have been forced to relinquish their positions when investigation by the Department of Justice disclosed their attitude and intent. From the data at hand at the present moment it is difficult to estimate the measure of success attained by the various denominations in eliminating enemy propaganda from parochial schools. Owing to the diversity of racial elements in the Catholic churches in Ohio the task has borne heavily upon administrative officials of that denomination. Complete success, therefore, should not be expected



until the comprehensive plans for the Americanization of parochial schools now being formulated shall have been put into effect.

Religious organizations were likewise expected to prevent the spread of enemy propaganda through the medium of the religious periodical press. Here again the Methodist church took prompt and decisive action. The editor of the most influential German Methodist publication in Ohio was warned at the outset that articles showing a tendency to favor the German cause must cease to appear. After the outbreak at Baldwin-Wallace college had revealed the extent of propagandist effort in German Methodist churches, the situation was again reviewed and it was then decided that the two German Methodist publications authorized by the Book Committee should be consolidated under the charge of an editor whose patriotism could not be questioned and that henceforth no other periodicals should be published in the German language. In the interest of Americanization, the complete elimination of German language publications was to be postponed until after the war. Lutheran, Evangelical, and Catholic periodicals whether published in German or merely expressing the views of German churches were also called to the bar of public opinion. The procedure was the same as in the case of teachers or preachers; whenever ecclesiastical authorities were slow to act the federal government took the situation in hand. A well known instance of federal action was the withdrawal of cheap mailing privileges from the Catholic paper, the *Josephinum Weekly*, published in Columbus, in April, 1918.

The gradual elimination of the German language in church services is another evidence that the churches of Ohio are pledging allegiance to the cause of the United States. While at times this action has been brought about by the coercion of public opinion the formal resolutions adopted by some of these German congregations prove beyond doubt that the desire to emphasize Americanism above all else was the dominant motive in these particular instances. The religious sect which has been most persistent in its opposition to federal and state authorities in Ohio is the Mennonite church. Since the Mennonite doctrines do not admit the existence of any lawful connection between



the government and those who hold the Mennonite faith, members of the stricter sects have steadfastly refused to serve under the military arm either combatant or non-combatant and it was not until the late summer of 1918 that the Governor of Ohio was able to announce that no more conscientious objectors were to be found in the state. Thereafter the federal agents who had brought about a change of view among the Mennonite farmers in Holmes county were free to turn their attention to the activities of the Mennonites in Indiana where deacons, ministers, and bishops of the church were cited to appear. In other churches, doubt and disloyalty have tended to disappear as the issues of the war have been made plain. That so radical a change of view could have been brought about in conservative German congregations with comparatively little disturbance is due in no slight degree to the vigilance of national and local religious organizations. Through unremitting efforts to purge their own ranks of enemy propaganda, the churches of Ohio have rendered invaluable assistance to local defense leagues and have thus materially lightened the labors of the federal department of justice.

The influence of the churches upon public opinion during the first year of the war moreover, has extended far beyond the limits of their own congregations. In accordance with the custom which has always prevailed in the United States, ministers, rabbis, bishops, and priests have taken a leading part in public meetings, in patriotic demonstrations, and in the activities of local and national committees. Through government bulletins prepared especially for the churches and through confidential communications transmitted through executives of their own organizations they have been kept in touch with the government program. They have proved effective Four-Minute speakers at public gatherings and in some places have delivered four-minute addresses to their own congregations. In anticipation of the depressing effect which might be produced by heavy casualty lists, two especial tasks were assigned to the churches in the late summer of 1918. On the one hand they were asked to assist in creating a public sentiment toward cripples in order that government plans for re-education might receive hearty



support, and more especially were they expected to afford both spiritual and material comfort to soldiers' families in distress. Both of these functions, it is true, would properly belong to the churches in any case yet they acquired a deeper significance from the fact that the churches were consciously serving the nation to further a cause which had blended patriotism, humanitarianism and religion into one impelling emotion.

In general war activities, the churches have also borne their part. Among those who were called to Washington at the request of the Food Administrator during the summer of 1917 when plans were first under discussion was a group of ministers from all sections of the United States and representing many shades of religious opinion. To them an appeal was made by the Food Administrator in person and to them the aim of the food campaign was clearly defined. In the spring of 1918 when the needs of the allies had become more imperative a circular letter from the Food Administrator was addressed to the ministers and churches in the United States, and at the same time local food administrators were advised to get into immediate touch with all churches in their respective districts. In pursuance of this suggestion, a mailing list of several thousand ministers was placed on file in the central office of the Food Administration in Ohio and through the bulletins regularly sent to these ministers the churches have been called upon to sustain the food administration throughout the state. Religious organizations have also had a share both directly and indirectly in Liberty Loan campaigns, in Red Cross drives, and in raising funds for the numerous social agencies engaged in war relief. Various methods have been employed. Subscription lists have been circulated, collections have been solicited, and at times a double purpose has been served by investing funds donated to religious organizations in Liberty Loans or War Savings Stamps. The practical work of women's religious organizations and that of the children has reached amazing proportions. In helping to carry through these various campaigns and in rendering material aid to war relief agencies, the work of the churches has not been unlike that of clubs, lodges, or other voluntary associations. There can be no doubt however that at times religious



zeal has given an added stimulus and that by so much the total of these contributions has been thereby increased. How far the several religious denominations in the state of Ohio have been successful in rallying the rank and file of their membership in support of the government is a question which can not be determined until further sources of information become available, and even then the historian may experience some difficulty in evaluating the religious factor. The attitude of their spokesmen, however, has been unmistakable and in view of the facts the historian of today must frankly acknowledge that religion has been among the forces which have added power to the will of the Nation during the first year of the war. In rural communities especially the influence of the churches has made itself felt.

The phase of religious work which has made the strongest popular appeal is that of organizations having a social as well as a religious character. Contrary to the oft repeated assertion that the churches have been negligent of their social functions, there is abundant evidence to prove that religious organizations in the United States still retain their traditional leadership in movements for moral and social betterment. The activities of the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the Knights of Columbus, the Jewish Welfare Board, and the Salvation Army have demonstrated beyond question their ability to deal with problems which can not be successfully met by purely social agencies. While these organizations derive their impulse from religious sources, they have not aspired to supplant the regularly ordained ministry of their respective churches. Their work is to be regarded rather as the concrete expression of a modern religious ideal which can not be made effective without the ministry and which without the Christian ministry would never have been evolved. The churches, therefore, while heartily supporting these organizations, have also endeavored in various ways to supplement their work.

The first care of the churches throughout the war has been to provide for the moral welfare of the men in service. Naturally the points of most imminent danger were the large communities in the neighborhood of camps and cantonments. The



work of the churches in these communities falls under three separate heads: first, the removal of temptation by the suppression of vice and the liquor traffic; second, providing entertainment and relaxation for soldiers on leave; and last, though by no means least, the purely religious service which is their essential function. In all three of these directions the churches of Ohio have been continuously active since the beginning of the war. To mention one conspicuous instance, the local Federation of Churches in Cincinnati not only took the initiative but has remained throughout the guiding power. Thus when it became evident that vice conditions in Cincinnati threatened to undermine both the health and the morale of soldiers stationed at Fort Thomas, a local committee including ministers and social workers undertook a thorough survey of vice conditions. The result of their investigation was promptly submitted to the War Department while at the same time the city authorities were advised to remedy the existing situation. As the restricted area in Cincinnati was being evacuated by the police, the Federation of Churches established relief stations in the neighborhood to provide temporary assistance for women who otherwise might become a greater menace to the soldiers upon the public streets. Entertainment for soldiers on leave has been furnished by church clubs, by social centers, and in the private homes of church members, while for those detained in camp special provision has been made by groups of volunteer entertainers. The religious aspect of the work done for the men in the service has intentionally been kept in the background by many of the churches out of respect for sectarian prejudices which might otherwise be offended, but as occasion offered the men have been welcomed in the churches, and the clergy have made great exertions to supply the religious needs of the camps until regular chaplains could be appointed. The hearty co-operation of the churches in every form of War Camp Community service has thus contributed in a considerable degree to the success of these endeavors.

Religious work at Camp Sherman was begun under the auspices of the Episcopal churches in Ohio. When the first five per cent quota of the draft reached the camp, the men were



greeted by a volunteer chaplain appointed by the Bishop in whose diocese Chillicothe is located, and for several weeks thereafter the only place religious service could be held was the little portable church which he had erected with the aid and consent of the construction department upon private property near the camp. When plans for a community center were developed and the need for a more commodious building became apparent, the sum of \$20,000 was promptly raised by individual members of Episcopal churches in the state. Being the only building near the camp exclusively devoted to religious purposes, the church has been freely offered to camp pastors and chaplains, and for a time regular weekly services were conducted at different hours by Episcopalians, Lutherans and Jews. The subsequent development of religious work at Camp Sherman has followed the plans outlined by the War Department in consultation with representatives of the various religious organizations. A special member of the Commission on Training Camp Activities has kept a general oversight of all religious activities, the actual work being done by camp pastors appointed and maintained by their own denominations. In order to avoid the overcrowding and duplication which threatened to result if each denomination were permitted to carry on its independent work in every camp, the War Department issued an order in July, 1918, requiring camp pastors to leave the direction of religious work in the hands of regularly appointed army chaplains whenever a sufficient number of the latter could be provided. In order to supply this need, an act of Congress had increased the number of chaplains, and a training camp had already been established to give them physical and military preparation for their work. In September 1918, no less than eighteen different denominations were represented in the group of chaplains then in camp. A full discussion of the plan for organizing a Chaplains' Corps which has been worked out through the co-operation of the War Department with religious organizations is beyond the scope of a paper dealing with churches of Ohio. Suffice it to note that appointments are made by the War Department upon recommendation from religious bodies in exact proportion to their membership as reported in



the religious census for 1916. Upon this basis the Catholic church nominates more than one-third of the chaplains in the army and navy, eight Protestant churches appoint two-fifths, while a little more than one fifth of the corps belong to other religious bodies.

The war work of the churches in Ohio can not be properly estimated apart from that of national organizations in which they are included. Some of these organizations in fact antedate the adoption of the constitution and their development throughout has been along national lines, for notwithstanding its diverse elements, religion in the United States must always be counted among the forces that have tended to break down barriers of state and section. At the outbreak of the war, therefore, the churches made haste to readjust their administrative machinery, with the expectation of rendering some form of service to the nation. The action of the Presbyterian church affords a typical illustration of the normal procedure. At the annual meeting of the General Assembly in May, 1917, a National Service Commission was appointed with full authority to place the resources of the Presbyterian church at the command of the Government of the United States. In accordance with their instructions the members of this commission sought an interview with the President in the course of which he frankly stated the conditions the government must necessarily impose upon religious agencies engaging in war work. The offers made by other denominations were accepted by the President upon exactly similar terms and during the course of the year each has concentrated its forces by appointing a commission to supervise its war work. Co-operation among the numerous sectarian organizations has been made effective through the General War-time Commission appointed by the Federal Council of Churches and intended to serve as a clearing house for the war time commissions of all denominations. This commission has so far been successful in minimizing the friction which might have resulted from lack of co-ordination. It has even succeeded in cooperating effectively with organizations which it does not represent such as, for example, the National Catholic War Council and the Jewish Welfare Board. It has taken the initiative in forming joint-



committees which have provided regular channels of communication between the government and local churches in the remotest sections of the United States.

The resources for carrying on religious work in connection with the war have been contributed through voluntary effort, the amounts varying in proportion to the numbers and wealth of the several denominations. The Catholic War Fund in the United States has reached the impressive sum of fifteen millions while a goodly number of smaller denominations have succeeded in passing the million mark. Each of these funds is administered by a special committee appointed by the Wartime Commission of the denomination and as a rule the ablest men in the churches have been asked to assume this task. It is a matter of interest to citizens of Ohio therefore that the Episcopal fund has been put in charge of a bishop from this state. The aggregate sum of religious contributions from Ohio will probably never be computed. Accurate accounts have not always been kept and there has been some overlapping and duplication. Contributions for religious work have been made at times by individuals who were not directly connected with any religious organization; donations from Jews and Protestants have gone to swell the Catholic fund; and Catholics have aided in the campaigns of other denominations. Yet the actual figures after all are of less import to the historian than the co-operative spirit which has prevailed, and of this religious records and periodicals afford abounding proof.

Co-operation then has been the keynote in the war work of American religious organizations. Yet though it has been accentuated by war conditions, this form of co-operation is by no means a creation of today. On the contrary, churches of various creeds were already working effectively with each other and with civic and social agencies in their respective communities before the war began, while churches adhering to the same faith and order had long since perfected their local, state, and national associations. Through pastoral or fraternal letters, through reports, pamphlets, and religious periodicals, the plans prepared by representatives of each denomination could be brought to the immediate attention of the remotest congregation. More-



over, the efficiency of religious agencies had been enhanced by the formation of interdenominational societies for cooperative effort in missionary enterprises and in the direction of social reform. Some of these religious organizations in fact had acquired an international importance through the establishment of foreign missions or as in the case of the Catholic church through their connection with a world-wide ecclesiastical system. The international significance of American Jewry had been intensified as American Jews assumed the leadership in promoting the interests of their co-religionists in other lands. Thus the machinery was already in existence for carrying on religious and social work upon a national or even upon an international scale. Not only was this true before the beginning of the war, but moreover, cooperation with the government in humanitarian and social endeavors had long been recognized as one of the essential functions of religious bodies in the United States.

In the larger program of war work which has been carried on by religious organizations in the United States the churches of Ohio have had an important part. The Protestant churches of the state have worked hand in hand with the federal government through denominational war commissions, through the Federal Council of Churches, through the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. In like manner Catholic churches in the four dioceses of Ohio have participated through the National Catholic War Council and the Knights of Columbus. The activities of Jewish congregations in this state are especially significant, because for the moment a Jewish synagogue in Cincinnati is the most active center of non-Zionist Judaism in the United States. Christian Scientists and the Salvation Army have likewise kept in touch with the government through organizations of national scope. The Friends in Ohio have aided the civilian population of France by furnishing workers and funds for the Friends Committee for Civilian Relief. Viewed in this larger perspective, therefore, the war work of religious organizations in Ohio is of national and even of international importance.

The rapid extension of the spheres of contact between religious organizations on the one hand and the federal government on the other resulting from this activity has already



aroused some apprehension in the minds of those who have observed it. Two danger points have been detected. The first is suggested by the warning conveyed to the Federal Council of Churches by one of its constituent bodies, that the Council should proceed with extreme caution in matters touching upon the relations between church and state. Attention was called to a more imminent danger by the Committee of Public Information when it became apparent that the churches of the United States were exposed to a most insidious form of enemy propaganda by the circulation of reports creating the impression that certain religious organizations were accorded preferential treatment by the government and that this was done for the express purpose of arousing sectarian strife in the United States. Thus far, however, the ogre of sectarian jealousy has not showed its head although there are some indications to be found in the religious press that profiteering in the form of religious proselytism has been found in the ranks of some few denominations. Certain it is that boastful statements concerning the work of a particular religious sect or equally boastful comment upon the number of converts brought into the fold while armies are in the field are not conducive to the obliteration of sectarian prejudices and unless promptly discountenanced by the saner elements in these denominations may in time threaten the harmonious relations which now prevail.

Reverting to the original question we may once more ask: What have the churches of Ohio had to do with the war? While awaiting the collection of records which will furnish conclusive evidence, this much at least must be said: the churches of Ohio have stimulated public opinion to an incalculable degree; they have successfully counteracted enemy propaganda within their own ranks; they have helped to sustain the morale of the men in service and of the civilian population upon which the army depends; they have contributed to the success of the various campaigns; they have aided the government in formulating and in administering constructive plans of social relief; in fine, the churches of Ohio joined with those of the nation in a league for service in order that the religious forces of the United States might be mobilized for war.















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